Which—
Dominate or Permeate?

WALT N. JOHNSON

Central BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

NPSB
J639

WHICH---DOMINATE OR PERMEATE?

A FRANK, BRIEF DISCUSSION OF OUR PRESENT BAPTIST WORLD SITUATION DARING TO BLAZE A TRAIL OUT OF THE WILDERNESS

By WALT N. JOHNSON,
Author of *Stewardship Vitalized*

Western Baptist Publishing Co.,
Kansas City, Mo.
1929

LIBRARY
CENTRAL BAPTIST SEMINARY
KANSAS CITY 2. KANSAS

Copyright, 1929, by
WALT N. JOHNSON

266.61
J71

JUST A WORD

I have hesitated to print these words in a book. But I have seen some first principles so clearly in our Baptist work that I could not play with them.

I am particularly indebted to Dr. Everett Gill of Europe and Dr. Chas. E. Maddry of North Carolina for helpful criticism of contents of the manuscript. However, they are in no sense responsible for views herein expressed.

Many points raised here have been discussed at length in *Stewardship Vitalized* and some matters mentioned will be given fuller treatment in *Stewardship Applied.* This, in part, explains the briefness of discussion given to some vital matters.

A few of these passages have appeared from time to time in THE NEXT STEP, bulletin of the Steward League of Baptist Ministers, and have been copied in several of our Baptist papers.

No committee nor board nor my publishers are to be charged with the views set forth in these brief pages. I assume full responsibility for them myself, and tremble?

N12861

What I say here, if it is true, is of interest to every thinking Baptist in the world. If it is even half true, it is of vital concern to every Southern Baptist.

Yours truly,

W. N. J.

1929.

CONTENTS

I

The World Approaching a Crisis . . 7

II

The Two World Programs Among Christians 17

III

The New Centre of the World . . . 27

IV

The Strategic Position of Baptists . 39

V

The Three Essentials in Southern Baptist Life 49

VI

Death-Chill or Birthpang? 61

VII

The Main Line 77

I

THE WORLD APPROACHING A CRISIS

Is the world getting better or worse? This question springs a debate anywhere. Some are plumb certain the world is continually growing worse—in a little while, the dogs will have us all. Others are dead sure the world is constantly growing better—just listen, we'll soon hear the angels singing.

But who is right about it? Is it really getting better or worse? Well, we are both correct. Yes, the truth is,

The World Gets Better And Worse

Good and evil are mixed up together here in the world. And the good in the world is getting better. And the bad in the world is getting worse. The wheat and the tares are growing together until the harvest. (Footnote, Matt. 13:30).

There are *more good people* now than ever before. And there are *more bad people* than ever before too.

Besides, good people are *more intelligent* than ever. And bad people are *more intelligent* than

ever, likewise. Intelligence, in itself, is neither good nor bad. But it makes good people better and it makes bad people worse. It only sharpens the battle between good and evil.

But, further, intelligent, good people are *more thoroughly organized* than they have ever been. And intelligent bad people are *more thoroughly organized* than they have ever been. Organization, in itself, is neither good nor bad. But it makes good people stronger and it makes bad people stronger. It strengthens both sides of the conflict between good and evil.

Still again, organized, intelligent, good people are *using more inventions* than they have ever used. And organized, intelligent, bad people are *using more inventions* than they have ever used. Modern inventions have no moral qualities; they are neither good nor bad. It is entirely a question of what kind of people is using them. Either a lie or a truth may go afoot or by radio. Aeroplanes may haul either Bibles or bottles, ballots or bombs. "The automobile is the devil's machine," said a grouch the other day. "Yes," answered a philosopher, "it is a devilish machine, if a devilish man is driving it, but it is an angelic machine with a consecrated man at its wheel." So indeed with all modern machinery. The su-

preme question is, who is using it, good people or bad people.

Intelligent, organized good people by the use of inventions are *working together on a world scale.* Likewise, intelligent, organized bad people by the use of machinery are *working together on a world scale,* too. One night, sometime ago, a cricket chirped in Los Angeles, California. That same cricket was heard immediately in New Zealand. If the chirping of a cricket is an international event, then surely the struggle between good and evil is a world affair. Our whole planet is reeling and quaking under a contest that spans all seas and covers all lands. No spot is neutral.

But, to top it all, good people, intelligent, organized, using machinery on a world scale, now have *more material wealth* than ever in all the life of mankind. But, likewise again, bad people, intelligent, organized and using machinery on a world scale, also have *more material wealth* than ever in all the records of man. This is the age of the mass-production of wealth. For instance, to say nothing of radio and automobiles, one manufacturing concern in this country is preparing to "hatch" out flying machines faster than fifty thousand old hens can hatch out chickens.

And these flying machines are to be distributed by high-powered salesmanship on the installment plan. Compared to the richest ancient king, the average workman in our land today is swimming in extravagance. No age was ever so wealthy as ours.

I am not one-half as much concerned about the material wealth in the hands of bad people as I am about the material wealth in the hands of good people who have not learned how to put it to righteous use. Materialism threatens to submerge our churches.

Good people, more numerous than ever, more intelligent than ever, more thoroughly organized than ever, using more inventions than ever, working on a world scale as never before, and having more material wealth than ever in all the annals of time, are getting ready for a united drive for righteousness. But stop!

Bad people, likewise, also more numerous, more intelligent, better organized, using more inventions, working together on a world scale and having more material wealth than ever in all the history of the world, are forming solid lines everywhere for the resistance of righteousness.

A Terrific World Battle Imminent

This battle between the righteous and the wicked has always been on. But it grows fiercer. With good ever ripening into the best and with evil ever rotting into the worst, the strife gets hotter. There can be no pause nor let-up till something finally snaps everywhere.

There seems to be a Crumbling of the Forms of Righteousness.

Old standards are now tense. Accepted institutions are in question. Ancient authorities are under attack. Governments are sitting light on the loyalties of men—Russia is now said to be the most stable government in Europe and in America we seem unable to enforce our laws. Our courts do not have the full public confidence. With the stink of oil on one of them and the gash of the tiger's claw on the other, our main political parties have lost grip on the popular faith.

We are no longer sure of our schools. They may lead us right or wrong. There are severe criticisms of modern education; athletics and amusements are walking off with high schools and colleges and universities. Educational centers may become hotbeds of materialism, in-

fidelity and even crime. Nationalized educational systems impregnate nationalisms and breed war. The public school is failing in moral education and Christian private schools are no longer sure of a healthy existence. There is a growing demand that our schools be overhauled.

The family is under threat of disintegration. Propaganda for birth-control and easy divorce and companionate marriage is in the air. Woman, forced to earn her own bread in our economic world and given the ballot in our political world, is demurring at the task of mothering our race around the hearthstone. Public eating places, apartment houses and hotels are becoming the style of the time. Our homes are stretched tense to the breaking point. And there is no relief in sight.

And the churches are under pounding criticism. If they are not vital institutions, they are going to be pulverized. Will they stand the test? But, alas! they seem to be sickly and debilitated. In the open country many of them are dilapidated. And, maybe sadder still, many active churches are depending upon publicity, prestige, fine buildings, music and organized routine to keep them going and the people are slipping away from them in the larger centers of popula-

tion. They are having difficulty in financing their work. They have almost entirely lost the power of discipline over their own members. They are succumbing to formalism.

Even our anti-ritual Baptist churches are sliding into a deadening decorum. We may not believe in rites but we get into ruts. We are running into *rutualism,* which is simply an unwritten ritualism. We might improve it by carefully writing it out.

Governments, courts, political parties, schools, homes, churches are all loosening their hold on the inner loyalties of human nature. Are all these, as social *forms* of righteousness, crumbling?

Well, there is a bright side to the picture—

There is a Resurgence of the Forces of Righteousness.

For the human mind is now coming into new grips with the first principles of life. The increasing complication of life's details and the multiplying questions about accepted traditions and inherited institutions are driving all real thinkers into the depths of human life in search of its primal energies.

This means a real revival of true religion.

Nothing else. A revival is simply God real again to men; it makes men over; it makes a turn in history; it blows out old forms with new forces. Old shells burst and new seeds come forth. Then institutions are either exploded or revitalized. We are in such a crisis now.

An absolute necessity now is a renewed dynamic in men that will solidify government; reinforce our courts; launder our political parties; purify our schools; give the family a clean bill of health; and empower our churches for their work. Without this, there is really threatened a general disintegration of our civilization.

Things are under a strain. There can be no truce between good and evil. This is no time for pessimists. This is no time for optimists, either. The need is for soldiers now. For things are going to be darker than any pessimist sees and brighter than any optimist sees. And the pull and the tug between them is going to be desperate. There has been no conflict in history, perhaps, like that we are entering now between the forces and the forms of good and the forces and forms of evil.

Whatever the battle of Armageddon is and wherever it is to be fought, we are likely already

inside the picket lines of the battlefield. There will be no more easy times for the true people of God, until the final victory of righteousness is won. It is a fight to the finish, with no more armistices. God keep his people secure in danger and happy in hardship. We are in the lines and the battle is on all over the earth.

What is the plan of this world battle for our generation? And where are the forces concentrating to fight it out? These are the questions to which this little volume seeks to give brief answer.

II

THE TWO WORLD PROGRAMS AMONG CHRISTIANS

Is Christendom ringing true to Christ? In the present world conflict do Christians present a solid front? Do the divisions among Christian people neutralize the forces of righteousness?

The Question of Christian Union

This question will not down. It bobs up everywhere. It looks like we Christians are getting both closer to union and further away from it alternately all the time. In Christian thought we have both a riot of variety and a repression of uniformity. There is a painful tenseness between these two tendencies in Christendom.

Yes, a Riot of Variety.

There can be no vital unity without infinite variety. Full expression is the price of freedom. Contrary ideas cannot come into contact without going into conflict. And the merciless publicity of everything in our time puts them into contact; then it is only in conflict that they come to poise. Modern Christianity, central in our think-

ing, is now tangent with all the religious thought of the world. New angles of view are striking us on all sides. Besides, the discoveries of science, following one another so fast we cannot keep up with them, are precipitating an impulse to make our faith definite and effective and cocksure. This brings on friction. Then, too, varying ideas have never had so many methods of propaganda—public speech, daily press, books, magazines, moving pictures, phonograph, radio broadcasting, loud speakers are all busy. The clang and clamor of conflicting convictions sound everywhere. There is no escape from them, remotest hamlet and hillside reverberate with them. Tired of excitement, many people are trying to retreat into indifference. A divided Christendom is now the despair of many Christians. Teeming varieties of militant ideas charging across the field of modern religious thought have grown and multiplied until there is now a griping distension. Christendom has a case of colic.

This is an unhealthy condition. And we are afflicted with physicians who are trying to give the disease an external, mechanical treatment. They are trying to annihilate vital differences by formally uniting our various organizations and

forcing an uniform expression of faith among all Christians. In these efforts at Christian union we are urged to clamp down on free souls

The Repression of Uniformity.

An organized age is impatient of spiritual liberty; it would stifle it. All the oppositions to Christianity are uniting in a civilizaton, complicated and compact like ours—this puts on organized pressure for the union of all Christians. There is a standardization process in our educational world which has already penetrated our church life and which demands conformity. All this imperils vitality and freedom.

The big business corporation has also come over into the religious world. There is an influential type of Christian leader who would work out our missionary plans for the whole world just like the Standard Oil company has laid its plans for business all over the world. The chain-stores idea is now tending to make a grade level for the work of our churches.

Many denominations are already federating. There is an active propaganda for universal federation. There seems a frantic fear that Christianity cannot preserve itself, unless it gets safely encased in one mighty monopoly. There are

still many clock-minded ecclesiastics who fear that it would be dangerous to leave the gospel of Christ free to run at large in the world. Somehow, it must be controlled!

There comes up out of all this an ugly intolerance. It keeps a crowd of ingenious churchmen busy trying to screw down some kind of top over Christian thought and activity to keep it from blowing off.

A swelling variety of views and a repressing uniformity of views, that is the plight all over the Christian world today. So there is bursting forth

A Volcano of Confusions.

The lid goes off. Vital convictions break out. Freedom is still left. Nonconformism becomes a passion. Explosives and repressives are all mixed up together. There is a general swelter and ferment. All ideas must either strive to become universal or else die. Sections and factions are forced into aggression.

Loud controversy and organized publicity jangle everywhere. So much of it confuses the public mind. There seems to the average mind ten thousand views of the Christian program filling the air.

But most of this confusion is noise and smoke and dust. For, after all, there are only two main ideas of Christ's reign on earth. All else is merely a variation of one of these ideas or a mixture of both of them.

Just Two World Programs

have appeared in the Christian thought of the centuries.

One is the Program of Domination; the Other is the Program of Permeation.

One is exterior control; the other is interior development. One is institutional; the other, personal. One requires a visible head; the other is built around an unseen throne in the souls of men. One is political in its method of spreading; the other spiritual—one depends upon perfect organization, the other upon a holy, loving spirit. The central concern in one is authority; in the other, liberty. One heads up in autocracy; the other flowers out into democracy. The domination program becomes finally a political scheme that manipulates the peoples of the world through governments. The permeation program becomes a holy contagion in the soul of the people, transforming their governments into democracies. The domination program is polit-

ical and militaristic. The permeation program is the hope for universal peace.

The world is ruled by institutional contrivances. But all service is personal. To rule is to dominate men by means of institutions. To serve is to permeate institutions with loving helpfulness to men. A clear principle of the New Testament is that the Christian is not to rule but to serve. Among pagans, the greatest rule; among Christians, the greatest serve. Ruling is simply another word for domination; serving is a good synonym for permeation. Institutions serve only as they are manned by men who serve, only as they put men into serving contact with one another. In God's kingdom men prove their fitness to rule by serving; their right to dominate by permeating. Jesus showed his right in the Father's throne by washing the dirty feet of men. The piles of God's throne reach down into the muddy bottom of polluted wash-bowls. Nothing in the hands of God's man serving men is unclean, or even secular. Thus the whole world is to be permeated by the Holy Spirit, not dominated by a religious monopoly.

The domination scheme has been tried in Europe for sixteen hundred years and has failed. It has left nothing there but an old shell and a

continent highly cultured but unspeakably hungry for the original, simple gospel of the New Testament.

To come to the plain point with the whole situation, it is—

Baptists and Catholics Face to Face.

I was in one of our American universities one summer. I had been wondering for a week who was to be my room-mate. I came into my room one morning and whom should I find sitting there but a Catholic priest. He arose and gave me his name and hand, saying, "I am a Catholic priest; you are a Baptist minister. We have been assigned to room together. Do you think we can get along peacefully?"

"Why, friend," I answered, "it looks to me it would be impossible for us to have any trouble. For we are so far apart we are not even in hollering distance. How could we possibly get up any trouble between us?"

"Yes," he laughed back, "we are a long way apart in our views. But I am consistent in my position. And you are consistent in your position. You and I can therefore have a respect each for the other which neither of us can have for that great throng of people who are all mixed

in the compromise grounds halfway between us."

And he was right about it. The Catholic idea and all those who stand for an autocratic form of church government and the Baptist idea and all those who stand for democratic principles in church work are the two poles of Christendom. More and more everything will revolve around these two axes. Let Baptists and Catholics stand forth and challenge the whole world from their positions. A great day will dawn when, at last, this fundamental issue between Baptists and Catholics is drawn clear in Christian thinking. If Baptists will dare in our modern world to ring true to their principles, there will be just two main currents in Christian thought: one Catholic-ward, the other Baptist-ward.

Can the Catholic Church adjust itself to modern democracy without turning somersault? Can Baptists and other Christians like them ever become efficient in spreading the New Testament gospel without building another eccelesiasticism? These are the two most fateful questions in Christendom today. Both these questions now answered "No" will leave the world in age-long despair. Both these questions answered "Yes" will prolong the strife between the domi-

nation and the permeation programs. Either alone answered "Yes" might fix the course of human history for the balance of time. Let Baptists work out the right answer to the second question and the next age will belong to Jesus Christ and to us.

The divisions of Christendom would be greatly simplified in the smaller communities now if we should reduce the number of churches to three: a Baptist Church and a Catholic Church and a federated church for all who could not be satisfied either in the Catholic or the Baptist church. That is the state of things in the Panama Canal Zone already. Do they need any other church down there? Is there not already, in many small towns, a drift toward this solution of the problem of too many churches? Does this not offer a practical suggestion for simplifying the general problem throughout Christendom?

No Compromise Now For Baptists

A tolerant indifference is growing among us. We are toning down fundamental differences between us and other Christian denominations. For instance, we are sliding into the easy route as to Easter. We are discussing the controversial matters that are general in

Christendom instead of stressing our distinctive principles.

We should renew stress upon the principles that have made us what we are as a people and as a significant section of Christendom: spiritual regeneration, a regenerate church membership, the autonomy of each church, liberty of conscience, the lordship of Jesus Christ, etc. We should eliminate all methods and agencies in our work not in deepest accord with our elemental principles. We should go shy always of institutionalism in our Baptist life. More and more securely, without apology, we need to keep ourselves planted on the patent and implied principles of the New Testament as the documentary grounds of our faith. From this position we are to cultivate fellowship with all believers in Christ and to fight to the last trench all enemies of Christ. For this fellowship and warfare we should study world conditions and find the most strategic position for centering our efforts. That is what we essay to do in the following brief chapters.

III

THE NEW CENTER OF THE WORLD

In the minimum equipment of the study of every man should be a copy of the New Testament and a globe. In our wonderful times, you can get both of them in a five and ten cents store. Don't get a flat map of the earth; get a round globe of it. It visualizes our planet, with its continents and oceans and chief currents of commerce.

Studying the New Testament will put the right spirit into a man, and gazing at the globe will give him a world view of his debt to his race. This simple equipment, just one volume small enough to go into his vest pocket and a globe small enough to carry around in his coat pocket, will make a world-statesman of every man who dares to use it continually in real thinking.

Now, with this little globe before us, let us trace out some of the main currents in the present course of events all over the earth. Here are a few outstanding facts under which nearly all the happenings of our day easily and quickly classify themselves:

The Western Hemisphere Is Swinging Into World Sway

Geography divides our planet into halves; the Eastern and the Western Hemispheres. We are in the habit of thinking of these hemispheres as two worlds: the Old World and the New World.

The Western Hemisphere is Destined to Lead the World.

For thousands of years it was held away from civilized men by impassable seas—it seems to have been reserved to give collapsing civilization a second chance. Now it is opened up to the white man. Here human society has made a fresh start unhampered by old traditions, by national jealousies, by worn-out religions. In the New World, from pole to pole, there are only two main languages; a person who knows English and Spanish can make himself understood anywhere.

Every square mile of soil in North and South America is consecrated to democracy. Not a throne stands in this half of the world. Here republicanism is more than an ideal; it is an hemispheric passion; revolutions are chronic. Here passionate democracy is seeking to lay

its hands on the fabulous, undeveloped resources of twenty-one new empires to build them into a peaceful reign of the people.

And Now the Western Hemisphere is Fast Coming Into Sense of Its Solidarity.

The territory of both Americas is so vast and the population has been so sparse and transportation has been so tedious and expensive that there has been very little sense of oneness in the New World. But that is all changing very fast now.

The Pan-American is arriving. The breath of Pan-Americanism is already in the air. The jealousy of the other Western Republics toward the United States is subsiding.

The Pan-American Congress in Cuba last spring marked a turn in our Hemispheric affairs. The visit of Calvin Coolidge to Cuba in that Congress may yet prove of more significance in world history than Woodrow Wilson's trip to Europe at the World Peace Conference. For if all the countries of the Western Hemisphere swing together, it is going to change mankind's center of gravity. Lindbergh's recent spectacular visit through the air to all the capitols of Central and South America, the goodwill visit

of President Hoover through the same countries before he took his seat at the head of our government and the meeting this winter of the Pan-American Congress in Washington City, all mark a new day in the common life of both Americas.

The popular imagination of both continents has been fired. There is no telling where it may stop. A new age has been born in the West.

Great possibilities are immediately at hand. There will soon be international sanitation in the Tropics. It is a question of only a short time until there will be daily air-mail routes between all the principal cities of the Western Hemisphere. Radio will soon bring all these cities into fireside intimacies every night. There will soon be a highway from Canada to Argentina along which a stream of automobiles will go plunging north and south between our two Americas across the Panama Canal clear over the top of the smoke-stacks of a stream of steamers plying east and west between the Atlantic and the Pacific. In ten more years it is probable that Toronto, Canada, and Buenos Aires, Argentina, will be closer together than were Washington City and Los Angeles ten years ago. We are living now in incessant thrill. There are deep

new stirrings in the life of the New World. We may yet see here a union of all our Western Republics. Two continents are now welding together behind the Monroe Doctrine. The West is finding a new soul. Our whole Hemisphere stretching from the Arctic to the Antartic Oceans is now becoming a conscious unit in the life of the world.

The Gulf of Mexico and the Carribean Sea Are to Be the New Centre of the World

Geology and geography have already fixed some things in the future of the world. And the location of the World's New Centre is one of them.

The Gulf and the Carribean, as a body of water, are already the physical centre of the New World.

This inland sea is the lap of the Western Hemisphere. It is the crotch of two continents. It is, through the Panama Canal, the confluence of two oceans. Here meet North America and South America; here meet the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. This Mediterranean of the Western Hemisphere is the groins of the New World. The Gulf Stream is the pulse of

the earth; the Gulf of Mexico is the geographic heart of the New World's Life.

But further yet—

Modern Developments are fast Making this Inland Sea the New Center of the World.

The Gulf of Mexico is not merely the centre of the New World; it is becoming the centre of the *whole* world. Three facts are making this new centre:

(1) Trade between North and South America is passing through it.

These two great continents have boundless, undeveloped resources ranging all the way from sea-level to mountain top, all the way from tropical heat to frigid icefields, all kinds of minerals, immeasurable oil wells and coal fields and water power. And they are both just beginning to get populated. And they are both barely started in the use of power-driven machinery in the mass-production of goods.

For instance, the banana is just one tropical fruit; it has been pulled green and put on the market all shrivelled up, and yet it has made traders fabulously rich. There are scores of fruits in the tropics like the papya and the mamade more luscious than the banana and too

delicate to ship ripe to cooler climes. They may all soon go on the market in refrigerator ships or by airline express. The possibilities of trade between the North Temperate and Torrid Zones on the western side of the earth is inconceivable. And the bulk of it will have to pass through Gulf and Carribean ports.

(2) Traffic between the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean will have to pass mostly this way.

The Panama Canal makes this route the jugular vein of the world's commerce. This Canal is already congested. It is only a few years until there will be another Canal dug through Nicaragua. That explains the careful concern of our government in the affairs of that little Republic. We are keeping our gun-boats and marines there in watchful waiting against the time when it will require two one-way canals to handle the ships that pass through the Carribean waters.

Take, for instance, even the trade between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of North America. It started across the continent by rail. But the second thought is coming to us now. A pound of freight anywhere in the Mississippi or St. Lawrence valleys destined for a Pacific port

does not have to climb over the high Rocky Mountains and be pulled across the wide western prairies. If it is taken via the Carribean and the Canal, it can be carried nearly all the way on cheap water rates. We are just beginning the construction of inland water-ways. Even our traffic in the United States that once went east and west is turning north and south through the Canal.

But this tendency is not merely national, nor continental, nor even hemispheric. It is working out on a world scale. The business through the Suez Canal is already greatly affected by it.

All the ports of the western coasts of Europe and Africa, of the eastern coasts of North and South America and of the islands of the West Indies in trade with the ports of the western coasts of North America and South America and of the eastern coasts of Asia and of all the coasts of Oceanica and of all the coasts of New Zealand and Australia will soon route most of their ships through the Carribean and Canal waters. And *vice versa,* too!

These processes affecting the transportation routes all over the earth have yet barely begun. There is no measuring their possibility in the next hundred years.

(3) The migration of the White Man into the semi-Tropical and Tropical countries is also a decisive element in making the Gulf and the Carribean the centre of the world.

The white man has been steadily moving westward all through the centuries until our time. Now he has gone so far west that he has met himself coming back from the east. That is the meaning of the unrest in China and India, the revolt of Asia. The white man has now to turn north or south. It is a cold reception for him in the frigid north. So he has to turn southward.

It is just at this juncture in the White Man's history that the sanitation of the warm countries begins. He has known for a long time how to kill tigers and lions and snakes. But just now he learns how to handle the mosquito. Yellow fever and other tropical diseases are mastered. This opens up the tropics for the White Man's settlement.

It is now cheaper for white people to stay *well* in a *warm* country than it is for them to stay *warm* in a *cold* country. This may possibly be the most significant event of the last four hundred years for the Caucasian race—who yet knows?

This fact is demonstrated in the southward migration of white people into Central and South America. It explains the recent real estate boom in Florida. We also see a side effect of it in the waking up of the southern part of the United States.

The trade between North and South America, the traffic between the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans and the migration of white people into warm countries are three inevitable world-currents that are running together in the Gulf of Mexico and the Carribean Sea. Nothing can now stay the forces which are making these mid-waters of the Western Hemisphere the center of the world.

The Centre of the Conflict Between the Two Christian World Programs

We saw in Chapter I that there is on throughout the world a growing conflict between good and evil and in Chapter II we saw that there are, fundamentally speaking, just two World Programs in Christian thought: the domination idea and the permeation idea—in other words—Catholic and Baptist. Now we see where the new center of the world is. So it follows that here, around the Gulf and the Carribean Sea,

is to be the center of the conflict between the Catholic and the Baptist conception of the Kingdom of God on earth.

Here the Catholic Church Must Make a Desperate Stand for World Domination.

The Catholic Church is losing its political grip on Europe. It is being dislodged politically from every important government in the Old World. It is making its plans to capture the New World. The Catholic Church in our western world is trying to appear democratic. It is in this struggle in every country from Argentina to Canada. It has just made a desperate stroke for power in the United States. It lost out this time. But it will come again.

Catholicism is going to strive incessantly to get its hands into the international affairs of the Republics of the Western Hemisphere. It did its desperate best recently to involve the United States diplomatically in Mexico. It will lose no effort in manipulating immigration so that Catholic majorities, steadily imported from Southern Europe, may finally seize the reins of government in our Western Republics. The astute, far-seeing strategy of the Roman hierarchy knows full well that the Catholic Church must get control around the Gulf of Mexico in the twentieth

century just like it had control around the Mediterranean Sea in the twelfth century. Or else the Catholic domination of the world can never be achieved again. We may expect these facts to control the policies of the Catholic Church for the rest of this century. We should stay on guard. It is to be a long-drawn-out contest. World issues are at stake around the Gulf of Mexico.

Here may be the pivot of western Christendom in the struggle between the Domination and the Permeation Programs.

For here around the Gulf of Mexico is also concentrated our Baptist strength, set for the permeation of the world with the Gospel of Christ.

Half the Baptists of the world are living near the northern shores of the Gulf and the doors are wide open for Baptist Missions in every country throughout Central and South America where the Catholics are in a life-and-death struggle to hold their power and to maintain their prestige. In fact, Baptists are beginning to thrive in all these countries. All this makes a favorable situation for Baptists to put on a permeation program all through the world.

IV

THE STRATEGIC POSITION OF BAPTISTS

With evil getting more intelligent and more thoroughly organized and using more inventions, working on a world scale and possessing more material wealth than ever before and with good, likewise more intelligent, better organized, using more inventions, working on a world scale and possessing more material wealth than ever in all the history of the world, the forces of evil and good must come into a central conflict somewhere.

With the Western Hemisphere coming into solidarity and swinging into world sway and with the Gulf and Carribean waters emerging as the center of the Western Hemisphere, it is easy to surmise where will be the vortex of the world battle between good and evil. That is, around the Mexican Gulf.

Here, in this new center of the world, Christendom itself is going on trial. For our modern Christendom is scandalously misrepresenting the Christ. It is in a swelter of materialism, national jealousies and denominational rivalries. Out of this confusion are arising two main

ideas: autocracy and democracy; domination and permeation. One calls for a mighty organization with sufficient political power to sit down on the whole world and make it keep quiet and behave itself. The other calls for a spirit of truth that has enough freedom and love in it to melt the hearts of men and put them everywhere into joyous service of one another and of all mankind. The Roman Catholics are already in the lead with one of these programs. And Baptists are in position to lead in the other program. If we sound the right note now and keep true to Baptist principles in our methods of organized work, all Christendom will gravitate to one or the other of these programs. This process of the simplification of Christendom seems destined to be centered around the center of the Western Hemisphere, the Gulf of Mexico and the adjoining waters and their shores.

Baptists were never in such strategic position as now. If we ring true to Christ, all Christians committed to the democratic interpretation of Christ will feel a deep pull to come our way.

This is the Baptist Age, If We Stand True to the New Testament

Three facts make it so:

(1) *The New Testament is now the most popular book of our day.*

It is translated into practically all the living languages of man. It is being turned out in mass production by modern printing machinery. The Sunday School has popularized it.

The New Testament is not a book of the cults. It is already in the hands of the people. The earth is being literally sown down with it. Russians and Hindus are reaching for it. These little volumes, scattering everywhere, are sticks of spiritual dynamite; they will go off at the right time to subsoil the soul of the world. Then a Baptist harvest.

(2) *The Scientific Method is coming into Christian Thought.*

Real Science takes nothing for granted. It wants nothing second-hand. It seeks to trace everything back to its source.

This attitude of mind, once established in Christian thought, will eliminate all the second growths of our modern Christianity. All traditions among us are already undergoing searching scientific tests. Ecclesiasticisms are under the knife, not of the surgeon alone, but of the dissector; actually being cut up just to see how

they were made. When this process goes a little further, it is possible that there will be only one ecclesiasticism left, the old Roman mother of them all; and she may survive only because of her power to whip off the investigators for a time. But even the Roman hierarchy will have to go ultimately.

The scientific attitude of mind is dissolving the traditions and excrescences and dogmas of our formal, organized Christianity. It is sending Christian thought back into the New Testament as the source-book of the Christian's faith. Doctrinal and ecclesiastical books are not going well these days on the market—the books that sell now among Christians are the New Testament itself and volumes that venture to interpret it afresh. The New Testament, studied with scientific care and with spiritual insight, will make Baptists by the millions.

Science impels us to test out the truth of the New Testament by actual experience; and then offers itself to help us in applying the experienced truth of the New Testament to the problems of our modern world. So we welcome real science as a mighty ally in our Baptist task.

(3) *Political Democracy is Spreading All Over the World.*

Kings are no longer taken seriously anywhere; they are all either petted or killed or ignored. All governments are working toward the democratic ideal.

But democracy is spiritual; it can never be achieved among unregenerate citizens. Real democracy is simply the social aspects of theocracy. If people are not born into the family of God, all effort at democracy fails. Then it is *vox populi vox diabolis;* the voice of the people becomes the voice of the devil.

Without Christ, democracy becomes mob-rule. The demagogue reigns in place of the king. Particularly in our present time through all China and India, all through Europe and Africa, North and South America and New Zealand and Australia, everywhere the world over, the reign of the people waits for the reign of the Christ. The New Testament is the Magna Charta of world democracy. This is the Baptist day in every nation, especially in the arriving republics of our Western Hemisphere. The world seems ready for spiritual democracy as set forth in Baptists and all Christians congregationally governed.

Baptists Are Now Scattered All Over the World

In 1927* there were in the world 11,425,003 Baptists, sprinkled over the earth: Canada, 142,-500; Central America and Canal Zone, 1,757; Mexico, 6,293; West Indies, 53,675; South America, 34,820; Great Britain, England, Scotland, Ireland, etc., 416,665; Continental Europe, 221,140; Russia (estimated), 1,000,000; Asia, 343,165; Africa (5 sections), 72,530; Australia (7 provinces), 33,001.

There are 98 different peoples among whom Baptist churches are found. Of these, 32 are in Europe, 30 mission fields in Asia, 17 groups in Africa, North America has 6 great conventions. There are 16 conventions in Central America and the West Indies, 9 in South America, 6 federated unions in Australia and 1 in New Zealand.*

Real Baptist strength can not be tied up in statistics, nor housed up in organization. Figures give less of the real strength of Baptists than perhaps of any group of Christians in the world. The Baptist strength is atmospheric,

*See Southern Baptist Handbook.

*See Proceedings Baptist World Alliance, Toronto, page 19.

rather than weighty baggage. It permeates rather than dominates.

In the last 100 years* Roman Catholics have increased 160 per cent; Greek Catholics, 144 per cent; Protestants, 152 per cent; Baptists, 2216 per cent. The age currents are evidently running our way.

Liberty, and not authority, is the Baptist passion. So our Baptist strength is not steam confined in an engine but rather pure air that corrodes and disintegrates the old machineries of ecclesiasticism and sets free the souls of men.

These few million Baptists, if true to the distinctive principles, are so many cells in the lungs of the world's body politic inhaling the fundamental teachings of the New Testament and exhaling the breath of a new age among men. Such values are vitally beyond the reach of scientists and statisticians.

A fact immensely potential in our modern world: these Baptists, sown together in isolated groups all through the nations of the world, are now coming into a consciousness of world mission. The public opinion of mankind is already electric with the basic principles of our distinctive Baptist life. Baptists now have once dared

*See Southern Baptist Handbook.

to act together in the use of world pressure for the religious freedom for one priest-ridden people, in Roumania. This incident is of universal significance.

The Baptist World Alliance has had its fourth Congress. As President of this body, Dr. E. Y. Mullins, lying feeble and worn in the gleams of the next world, sounded in his last great message to his generation perhaps the most prophetic call of modern times as he spoke on *Baptist Life in the World's Life.* This document will thrill generations after us.

Baptists are already feeling the grip of world destiny. And, providentially,

Our Baptist Strength is Concentrated at the New Centre of the World

Of the 11,425,003 Baptists in the whole world over six millions are living in that part of North America that hovers near the northern shores of the Gulf of Mexico. Here, at the new centre of the earth, we now have the Baptist stronghold of our age. Here are perhaps 3,000,000 colored Baptists; here are 3,765,001 white Baptists,* 25,561 churches, 22,902 ministers, three Theological Seminaries, 31 Senior

*See Southern Baptist Handbook, 1927-8.

Colleges, 40 Junior Colleges, 41 Academies, 29 Hospitals, and 19 Orphanages. The Baptist Young People's Unions, Women Missionary Unions, The Baptist Brotherhood and Sunday Schools are all well organized and aggressive. Such a constituency, with such equipment, at the new centre of the world, should be at least a favorable start in world permeation.

Then, too, this Baptist stronghold in Southern United States is in the midst of a population that still believes in the Bible as the revealed Word of God. When destructive higher criticism was raging all through our western civilization this section of North America was lying prostrate in the poverty and isolation of the fallen Southern Confederacy. The people were too poor to buy any books but the Bible itself. Thus were they insulated. Out of the ashes of the Civil War and the reconstruction period following it, this people, still holding the whole Bible in unquestioning faith, came back into touch with the rest of the world. So here equipped for world service at the cross-roads of the world, stand these nearly four million white Baptists with an open Bible in the midst of a compact population that still accepts the Bible as the revelation of God.

The Gulf of Mexico is to be to the New World what the Mediterranean Sea has been to the Old World. A World Program has been put on around the Mediterranean: the program of domination by the Pope of Rome about the twelfth century. Now there is to go on in the twentieth century a program of permeation around the new Mediterranean of the world, the Mexican Gulf. Are Baptists equal to it? Well, they must rise to it, or be traitors to Jesus Christ. There has been no greater challenge to a people since New Testament times. Here Baptists and Catholics stand face to face in a death grapple for the world. Here is the spiritual Verdun of another World War. The issue is joined. We Baptists of the South are in the central arena. Shall we stand or fall?

V

THE THREE ESSENTIALS IN SOUTHERN BAPTIST LIFE.

If the reasoning of this volume thus far is correct, then Baptists concentrated around the new center of the world are under necessity to launch a real world program. In a situation like this, forced to face world issues centrally, we should examine carefully our means of co-operative effort and take stock of our resources.

The fact is, there is grave danger that Southern Baptists will get sidetracked in their present, serious crisis. Expedients to meet emergencies are risky in any cause fundamental to righteousness. We are now in peril of not only using expedients but of institutionalizing them permanently in our work. With us, institutions are mere means to spiritual ends. They now threaten to become ends in themselves, and they are beginning to appeal to us for their own sakes. If this tendency is not checked, our Baptist organized work is going into wreck. Institutionalism is a deadly foe to Baptist life.

Three essential questions now stare at us Southern Baptists for fundamental answers:

(1) What is our most valuable asset?

(2) What is our most vital agency?

(3) What is the supreme religious issue of our times?

These three questions plough to the bottom of our situation. The right answers to them will put us down on solid rock. The right answers to them, wrought into a plan of action, will mark out the route to world-permeation by Baptists.

Now these questions singly:

What is our most valuable asset? It is our

Twenty-five Thousand Churches.

Among these sovereign churches all our denominational machinery is a mere incident and an instrument of co-operation. Not our schools and colleges and seminaries, not our endowments, nor even our conventions are our greatest asset. But we have begun to think so. We are getting the Baptist mind tangled in a network of extra-church agencies.

Our local churches, themselves, are more important in our Baptist work than any agencies we are using to stimulate and develop them in denominational activity.

These churches are not mere organizations. They are spiritual organisms. They are God's

substations of power and transforming centers for the earth. They are "multitudes with one heart and soul,"* companies of people regenerated and committed to work together in permeating the world with the reign of Christ. That is, they are to be all this.

But they are now in a devitalized condition. They are not functioning properly; we are thinking of them merely as inherited institutions or as religious clubs or as sources of revenue for denominational work or as mass-meetings of worshippers or even only as houses. They are trading pastors instead of following them. Think of it, 476 applications, direct and indirect, for one vacant pastorate—this says "Good-bye to the Holy Ghost!" The attendance of the people in many churches is thin and irregular. They are in financial difficulties in carrying on their work. They follow routine and unwritten formalism in their services. The power of discipline over their members is almost gone. All this is true, for the most part.

These churches must be revitalized. This is our supreme, immediate necessity. And this revitalization can not be done by any of our denominational institutions. This is a work of the

*See Acts 4:32.

Spirit. Nor can it be done by an evangelistic campaign—even evangelism is not the cause, but only an effect of a revival. Regarding evangelism as a sure cure for all our troubles is the very cause of some of our worst troubles. It will take a spirit-filled ministry and a revival to get our churches right.

Revitalized churches will glow and shine with the love of Christ, with a sense of their stewardship to God, of their debt to the whole world. And they will put our present denominational agencies into proper function or else they will blow them out and replace them with methods more effective.

Now what is our most vital agency? These churches can never be revitalized without

A God-Called Ministry.

An ordained ministry is our most vital agency in the work of these churches, for, according to the New Testament, the churches are to be led by ministers appointed by the Holy Spirit. The ministers are God's overseers on the job of the churches.*

There is nowhere a wider contrast between the Baptist and Catholic conceptions of church life than in the relation of ministers and

*See Acts 20:28.

churches. With the Catholics, there is one Church only (universal) and the minister, or priest, stands between the people and the Church. But, with Baptists, there are many churches (local) and Christ himself stands between each pastor and each church. The churches are the candlesticks, the ministers are the stars; but the stars are in the hand of the glorified Son of man as he stands in the midst of the candlesticks. The Apocalypse unveils this picture to us.* In Catholicism, Christians are connected with Christ through the Church. Among Baptists, Christians are connected with churches through Christ. To the true Baptist minister, Christ is closer than the church he serves. This interpretation of church life and of Christ puts imponderable and inescapable obligation upon us Baptist ministers. No other men upon earth have such a weight to carry nor so much help in carrying it as the real ministers of Christ in his churches.

So great is our responsibility and privilege that we need now to ask

Is Our Southern Baptist Ministry Breaking Down?

As we have already seen, there seems now a

*See Rev. 1:13, 14.

general break-down of all kinds of institutions, government, parties, courts, families, fiduciary agencies, and even mission boards. Is our ministry surviving in this threatened, general collapse? Is modern State education co-operating with the ministry in moral leadership of the people or merely tolerating it? Are there not even evidences in movies and dailies and magazines and popular fiction and radio jazz of a concerted propaganda against us ministers as a class? Well, it surely seems so.

There are indications that, even in our Baptist life, the minister is under pressure to become merely a salaried functionary in the churches. We are developing self-conscious groups in our churches, working in rivalry among themselves and manipulated from the outside of the churches. The typical minister is under continual goads to become a thirty-minute artist on Sunday and a six-day, business administrator in the average active Baptist church. This is a bad sign. It shuts up God's leaders in a treadmill routine of details. It muffles the prophetic tone in our ministry.

Let an Ordained Ministry Resume Its Leadership in Our Churches.

Whoever and whatever is responsible for get-

ting us into our present, desperate plight, we know who is responsible for leading us out of it. This responsibility, the true ministers of Christ in our Southern Baptist Convention cannot escape.

We preachers, in a sad case like we are now in, need to examine ourselves. Each of us is under necessity to search his own soul with questions like these:

"Do I still believe God called me into the ministry, and am I specially called to my present work?"

"Am I willing now to sacrifice as much and live as hard in the actual work of the ministry as I once did in school getting ready for the work of the ministry?"

"Have I the spirit of the pioneer preacher who with no equipment but a Bible and a hymn-book and a saddle-horse went out in joyous courage to win a continent to Christ?"

"Am I a professional evangelist? Or a professional pastor?"

"Am I salary-conscious in my work as a minister?"

"Am I leading or following my people? Am I God's overseer in my church or only a hireling working for pay?"

"Am I a priest or prophet in my ministry?"

"Am I a real steward of God myself? Do I actually believe in New Testament Stewardship? Am I practicing it, at least to the extent of rendering God a tenth of my personal income? Am I daring to preach Stewardship to my people?"

Let two thousand of our 22,000 Southern Baptist preachers find in their own souls the right answer to these questions, then let them get together in conferences long enough to find their common mind and, at once, a new fire will begin to burn among us and the clouds will begin to lift off our situation.

Our Immediate Need Is Some Protracted Conferences of our Southern Baptist Ministers.

Quickly as possible the whole territory of the Southern Baptist Convention should be covered with one-day, Baptist Ministers' Conferences. Out of this round of one-day conferences there should be precipitated at least fifty five-day conferences in fifty different centers of the South.

In these central conferences time should be given to unhurried study and to intercession. We should think together and pray together until we come to one mind as to what is the present real issue among Southern Baptists. Side is-

sues have been dividing us. The supreme issue, once found, will unite us. Then a new morale will blaze out in the soul of our ministry and a militant team-work will begin among us ministers. In due time the churches will feel the glow and the stars will light the candle sticks again.

And now to the third question:

What is the supreme religious issue of our times?

The Spiritual Stewardship of Material Wealth.

Yes, the *spiritual* stewardship of *material* wealth. In our modern, compact and intricately organized world, the spiritual can no longer retreat from the material and let it alone; the spiritual now must advance toward the material and master it. The alternative is theoretical monasticism or practical stewardship.

The supreme religious issue of the ages is the presence and Lordship of Jesus Christ in human life. Now whatever in any period most stubbornly resists Jesus Christ, that becomes the supreme issue of that period. The stiffest resistance to Christ in our day is the unwillingness of redeemed people to put money, the essence of material things, to spiritual uses. The King-

dom of God on earth now halts for a spiritual interpretation of all the institutions of property, the restoration of the rights of personality over possessions. Here is the tug of war. There is no evading it. The fate of our western Christendom hangs in the balance.

There are three fateful perils that face us in our present so-called Christian world: materialism in our civilization; covetousness in our churches; and threatened financial bankruptcy in our Christian world program. If allowed to go unchallenged and unchecked, either of them alone will ruin us. But all of them, at the same time, are upon us now.

There is only one principle with which to meet them. That is the Christian stewardship of wealth. Back then to the New Testament in search for the grounds of stewardship inside conscious, Christian experience. We shall find it there.* That will renovate our evangelism. It will revise our conception of the Christian life. It will work changes in our Christian education.

When we realize that we are in a crisis as to the future of Christianity in the world and when we once feel that we have faced a supreme issue that tests our loyalty to the Lord Jesus

*See Stewardship Vitalized.

Christ in our Baptist life, we shall be willing to readjust all the agencies we have outside our churches. Live churches with spirit-led ministers leading them into a spiritual stewardship of the abounding wealth of our machine-producing age—give us these and we can still cope with our situation, even if we should lose everything else. This is our way out in answer to the call of our Christ to the rescue of a distracted world. Dare we go it?

VI

DEATH-CHILL OR BIRTHPANG?

With the good growing better all over the earth and with the bad becoming worse all over the earth, the world-battle between the good and the bad is getting hotter all the time. The forces of good in this conflict are committed to two programs: domination or permeation. Catholics lead one and Baptists may assume leadership of the other. The Western Hemisphere, solidifying itself, is swaying into world lead and centralizing its life around the Gulf of Mexico and the Carribean Sea. Here, at the world's new center, is concentrating the age-long battle between good and evil; this center is also drawing into pointed, central conflict the Catholic and the Baptist programs. Thus links the chain of thought so far in this volume.

So Southern Baptists are caught in the swirl of the world's centripetal forces. We are here in the vortex of the ages. The thrill is so deep we tremble between exultation and despair. We cannot yet be sure whether our present pains are death or the birthpangs of a new age.

Is the Death-Chill Upon Us?

Are we succumbing to the chill of material

developments? Are the power-dams, thrown across the rivers of our land, also damming up the spiritual impulses of our people? Is the irreligion of our general educational system icing our hearts? Are the new tides of trade flowing into our Southern States already overflowing our souls in the lowlands of commercialism? Is our spirit freezing?

In the strain of these compelling, new conditions, is our Southern Baptist work disintegrating or is it settling down into a deeper coherence? Are we dying or being born again for a greater destiny? These be grave questions.

Our weaker churches do not see our world situation. Our stronger churches are retreating from it into top-heavy local programs and religious routine and standardization and easy, luxurious living. They are putting up great church buildings and boasting of it. We have forgotten that the great buildings of history have practically all gone up in times of religious degeneracy. Our rivalry in fine church buildings may mark our decay.

We do not realize our peril. We are benumbed. Our souls are asphyxiated in materialism. Our Baptist work is paralyzed with debt. Our agencies are collapsing. Our morale

is chilled. Confidence among us is shaken. Two traitorous treasurers have had more spectacular publicity in the last three years than all our Southern Baptist work has had in ten years.

Present Southern Baptist Methods are Inadequate.

We are depending upon evangelism, Sunday Schools, B. Y. P. U.'s, Women's Missionary Unions, Brotherhoods, pastoral administration, financial campaigns, and Baptist state papers and budgets to do the work. And the plain truth is, they are all falling, as we now use them. Evangelism, as we now have it, is not a cure for our troubles; it is a main cause of our disease. Our Sunday school and B. Y. P. U. work is setting standards that threaten to ravel out into religious red-tape. Our state Baptist papers are read regularly by only about fifteen per cent of our people. Our W. M. U. is tending to become jealous for group credits in the finances of our churches and our Baptist Brotherhoods are functioning so far in only a few spots. We have never really worked the budget yet. Our pastors are so burdened with details of administration that they are becoming sermonetters in their pulpits instead of prophets among their people. And high-pressure campaigns are dividing the

lives of our faithful few into periods of calm and periods of pain. We are now getting nowhere much, except numerically and architecturally.

In the last ten years we have baptized nearly two million people into our churches and added over one hundred and twenty-five millions of dollars to our church buildings. This seems great, but mark please—during this same period the percentage of the total contributions of these churches given to missions and benevolence, as against local expenses, has steadily descended from 27 per cent to 19 per cent.* There is something radically wrong with our evangelism and local church life: our churches are chilling with growing, missionary indifference while they are adding members and building temples. Where will two more decades of this downward sweep land us? It will make us a mass of ease-loving people pitiably provincial with nothing much to show our faith but church houses and Sunday clothes. It is time for a halt and some thought.

Maybe we are in the dark just before dawn, in the lull before the storm. It now seems the zero hour before battle. With Byron—

*See Southern Baptist Handbook, 1927-8.

"I had a dream which
was not all a dream."

I dozed and heard an auctioneer's cry; he was selling our Home Mission Board. Then he knocked off our Foreign Mission Board. I slept again and dreamed that our Sunday School Board had failed in business; all its assets were under the sheriff's hammer. I went into a nightmare and I seemed to see all our agencies sold out; all our boards had been liquidated; all our schools and colleges and seminaries had been nailed up for debts; our whole denominational press was foreclosed. Everything was chill and dark.

Then, half awake again, I was assured that our ministers, once aflame with the love of Christ and with a New Testament experience of Stewardship, could kindle our churches into a missionary enthusiasm that would replace in ten years all these lost agencies and institutions. Now, wide awake, I know we still have all our institutions and interests and that we could, with our stewardship once realized, pay off all their debts in one month. This would set them free to serve our churches and pastors in the permeation of the world with the reign of the present, living Chirst.

These half-dreams and waking thoughts do not overdraw the plain facts of our present plight. We are now at the pass where our Baptist forces are either going to fall to pieces, or else get integrated into a living army standing together in God's presence all over the earth. Die, or be born again to greater life. That's it now, for Southern Baptists. Which shall it be?

We are facing perhaps the greatest challenge that has come to any people in all the two thousand years of Christian history. May the pains now upon us prove to be

The Birthpangs of a New Age.

Death is disadjustment of life to its surroundings. Birth is vital adjustment to larger environment. No people ever passed through a greater change of environment than that now upon Southern Baptists. We must find proper adjustment or die. The deepest thing in our Baptist life must be jointed up with the central interest of our times. With us Baptists, that is: the personal experience of God in each soul must be set in with the spiritual use of material things. Here we enter economics. This is Stewardship. To work it out in the whole scheme of our Baptist co-operation will require an adjustment

profound enough to initiate a new age among men.

As this adjustment advances,

A General Upheaval in the present Economic World is Inevitable.

One of the most stupendous experiments in all human history is being tried out in our day in Russia. It involves the daily lives of one hundred and fifty millions of people. It is led by a party of nearly a million members, every one of whom has taken a vow of poverty and has entered hard training.

One million Southern Baptists who economically take the teachings of Jesus Christ as seriously as these Russian communists take the teachings of Karl Marx would immediately thrill the whole world with the message of a new hope and a new peace.

In the middle ages we had military Crusades. They lasted over two hundred and fifty years. Army after army got on the march to rescue the Holy Land from those who rejected Christ. Many of them never came back. Weird and half-savage as these Crusades were, they came from a crude revival of Christianity: Christ became real to men in the military realm; hence came the Christian soldier.

Now we are in another revival that is to turn the tides of history: Christ is becoming real to men in the economic world. Out of this Revival is coming the Christian Steward.* If military Crusades were carried on by Christian soldiers throughout Europe, we now need an Economic Crusade carried on by Christian stewards throughout the world.

And It Will Take a Real Crusade, too.

A quick campaign will not do the work. The condition in Europe before the Crusades was simple compared to our present situation in the Western Hemisphere. Peter, the Hermit, and the crusaders, aroused by his fiery preaching, lifted a sleepy continent into the glow of a general movement toward the Holy Land. Now our task is to lift the whole world, overflowing with material wealth from organized machine production, up into a sense of the actual presence in all human life of the divine Owner of the earth. This is an age-task; it can only be begun in one generation. And Southern Baptists are now rightly positioned to begin it.

But before this Crusade can come, our present shriveled idea of Stewardship must burst as an old shell. For stewardship is not merely

*See Stewardship Vitalized, Chapter II.

a traditional trick to raise money for religious work. It is not a fossilized law of the tithe. Realized in God's child, it impels the regenerate man beyond the tithe as far as grace reaches beyond law. Only incidentally it provides money for Christian work, but it does it surely.

Stewardship is the economic significance of spiritual regeneration. It is the spiritual gripping the material. It is heaven's blazing link forging together vital Christianity and our pagan economics; it is saved souls saving a lost business world. It is *economia.* It is to blaze with a significance that will light a new age; it is to be made the age-symbol for our time. Stewardship—we must give it an epochal significance or else find a new word for it. If not, a faulty vocabulary dams back the spiritual tides of a new epoch. That cannot be. Tear off the shroud of this grand old word and let it free in the souls of real, modern Christians.

Let our ministers, in their responsibility as God-called leaders of God's people dare to launch a crusade for New Testament Stewardship, not as an expedient for meeting immediate emergencies, but as an experience normal to every Christian to be proclaimed evangelically and worked out educationally in all our churches.

But sad to say, many of our ministers are not yet thinking at all on Stewardship. Of those who are thinking on it, very few, very few indeed, are thinking together. There is so much divergence of opinion among us preachers on the question of Stewardship and tithing that we are confusing our people with discordant notes in our preaching. Our whole Baptist program is balked now until we ministers think together on this supreme religious issue long enough to sound a common note in a general call to our people.

If we could get even an hundred of the real stewards in our Southern Baptist ministry in one place somewhere for a month to study together on New Testament stewardship, to confer together on our present grave situation and to intercede together before God for a fresh experience of Christ's immediate presence in our churches, that would be a real start in the right direction. Then, from this season of study and conference and intercession, there would go out a group of God's men ready with an intense common conviction of stewardship to lead in fifty other such Conferences of Ministers for a week all over our territory. Then things would begin to warm up in our ministry on the subject.

Out of these conferences there would come a renovation of the superficial evangelism that has already filled our churches with throngs of people out of touch with Christ and with his program for the world. It would come home to us that the impulse of Zacchaeus to share his goods with those who were in need is just as normal to the real Christian as the impulse of Andrew to bring his brother to Jesus. We would begin to emphasize the second revival along with the first revival of the Jerusalem church.*

This would mean a new evangelism. And, as this writer has found out from the multiplying invitations he receives, there is already a deepening and widening demand in the churches for this kind of evangelism. If we had, right now, enough ministers equipped for this service and teamed together for real field work, to answer the calls of the churches, a new tide would break over in our midst at once. The churches are waiting for it.

Then with this evangelism, cleansed and refined and made effective by a glowing sense of stewardship, there is to be a new Christian education that deals with stewardship as an experi-

*Discussed at length in Stewardship Vitalized by this author.

ence of the Christian soul to be built into Christian character instead of a mere expedient to get money for Christian work. We shall have to find a way in our churches for training stewards. We are now only trying to teach stewardship. And Stewardship is a Sunday subject; but training stewards is a week-day work. Here we may find *a week-day use* for the millions of dollars piled into our Sunday School buildings. Here is the new educational frontier of modern Christendom.

An effective Stewardship Crusade involves a new evangelism and a new education in our churches. It will require twenty-five thousand protracted meetings and twenty-five thousand Steward schools in our churches to commit our people to Stewardship and to train them as stewards of God in our present materialistic civilization. This is no child's game. It is a generation's job. Dare we ministers start with it?

This Crusade will have to be initiated by our ministry. Any other agency we have would treat it as an expedient. But we preachers can begin with Stewardship as an experience. This is vital. No board nor institution we have can coral our ministry. It will have to start from within the soul of our ministry as a conviction

that Stewardship is inherent in the Christian life, that Stewardship is to be erected into Christian character, that Stewardship is necessary in the world which Christ is saving through his churches. It cannot come by mechanical, campaign organization; it will have to start in a revival.

But once it is thus launched out of the soul of our ministry thinking and praying together over our present helpless case, it will revitalize all the agencies and boards we now have that ought to be spared out of the wreck of our approaching collapse and gear them into powerful action. Women's Missionary Unions, Young People's Unions, Sunday Schools, all now operating at a disadvantage on account of the chilly atmosphere in our churches, will speed up, when we preachers get afire enough to raise the temperature just a little.

An observant minister, attending the Southern Baptist Sunday School Conference last year at Greenville, South Carolina, remarked, "We have here the finest piece of machinery I have ever seen. But gentlemen, if we preachers do not get full of the Holy Ghost, this machinery will grind our ministry into sausage."

Yes, but if we preachers do get full of the

Holy Ghost and dare to face spiritual stewardship of material wealth as the real religious issue of our time, we shall put a full head of steam in behind this machinery and drive it as a dynamo here at the new center of the world to electrify our whole civilization with a divine sense of the rights of God to all that we have been calling ours. That will be a new day. Is it beginning to break? Yes—if enough of us preachers will give God a full chance with us in our churches.

The possible income from such an upheaval in our ministry and in our churches is almost inconceivable. Dr. E. P. Aldredge, our statistician, dealing in cold figures and reckoning from conservative averages,* estimates that one-tenth of the income of Southern Baptists would be at least two hundred millions a year. And one-tenth is the minimum for a man who is under grace to render to God; if he is satisfied to stop long even at that, there is something wrong, radically wrong, with his experience of Christ who impels him to give over his cloak with his coat, to turn his other cheek to the smiter, to run the second mile beyond the requirement of the law. These figures stagger us; but they are

*See Southern Baptist Handbook, 1927-8.

low and small if we think of the sacrifice of Christ for us. This amount might be too much for us if we keep thinking of the wilted plans we are now working and of the pitiable, little debts we have upon what we are now pretending to do. But they are inadequate if we dare to take an hemispheric outlook upon our Southern Baptist work for the next fifty years, not to say a world outlook for the next five hundred years. Dare we Southern Baptists take Jesus Christ seriously and use our present strategic position and abounding resources to permeate this whole planet with his loving reign? Dare we?

But while we are drilling inward to the soul of our ministry and to the life of our churches to find the foundations for the spiritual stewardship of material wealth, we need to face outward toward the whole world with missions on the main line again. For we shall then have bubbling up out of living churches plenty of resources to support a real world mission program everywhere.

Thus, in this crisis, we shall be born again to our larger task. Otherwise, we die.

VII

THE MAIN LINE.

We now have a long train of causes in our Southern Baptist work. But we are lost on sidetracks. Missions is the trunk line. But we have congested the main track with other things. We have choked up our road with institutions. Now traffic is badly congested. Give us once more a clear main track and a full head of steam and we can very soon clear up the congestion.

Southern Baptist co-operative work begins to look like a cyclone has passed through it. Our Foreign Mission Board is shocked and faint; it also has been chilled with a theft; it is pouring much of its lifeblood into old debts instead of live missionary work; it is keeping at home perhaps five hundred trained missionaries and one hundred and eighty-six veteran missionaries, many of them on salary, for lack of funds to pay expenses. Our Home Mission Board is in collapse; overwhelmed with debt and looted by one of its trusted officials of nearly a million dollars, it cried in distress to another of our agencies for help and had to be reorganized to carry on even till the next session of the South-

ern Baptist Convention. Our Education Board is already abolished and our Executive Committee is handling the remains as its receiver. Since last October we have had two southwide, special spurts to raise money, the Baptist Honor Day and the Christmas Thank Offering; both of them together did not bring in enough cash to pay back what two thieves have taken from us, to say nothing of the interest on our debts. But that is not the worst yet; here is perhaps the saddest fact of all:

For even administrative expenses of the Southern Baptist Convetnion, we are now depending upon the profits of a business enterprise—for instance the Sunday School Board is paying the expenses of our Executive Committee out of *profits* made on Sunday School Literature *sold* to our churches. This situation is forced upon the Sunday School Board. It is an unhealthy state of affairs. It cannot last indefinitely without serious effects. Without relief, the Sunday School Board will ultimately either stumble as an overworked packhorse or become our master. It may forebode a dangerous centralization, with a deadening commercial grip on Southern Baptist life. The Sunday School Board should be relieved to conduct its

affairs purely for service and all its incidental profits should be used to enlarge its service to our people. If our Southern Baptist work were in healthy condition we should be subsidizing the Sunday School Board instead of requiring the Sunday School Board to subsidize our work. We are now supinely riding the Sunday School Board. How long can this ride last? And where will it take us?

But we are not to despair. If the second, third and fourth chapters of this book are even half true, a new order of things is upon us. The old order is in wreckage. Our debts are the debris of the wreck. Our first task is to get the debris of the wreck off the highway.

But what shall we do with the five millions of debt on the Southern Baptist Convention? Well, don't try any more campaigns and drives and honor days and Christmas debt collections.

Assure every creditor that every dollar of our debts will be paid and that every Baptist dollar is worth a thousand mills. Then pool all our Southern Baptist Convention debts and put them on the Executive Committee to be met in annual payments out of the allocation of a certain per cent of the proceeds of the Co-operative Program. This done in good faith, we shall at

once be able to readjust our whole mission work; we can then start anew with our new situation.

It is beginning to appear that the Executive Committee is simply the wrecking crew of the Southern Baptist Convention. It was put in charge of the wreckage of the Education Board. It was called to the wreck of the Home Mission Board. Why not put it in charge of all our wrecks at once and instruct it to put them off the road and to fix a passable detour while it is clearing them off?

There is a fear in some minds that the Executive Committee might ultimately centralize our Baptist work. But there is no danger of it, unless our other agencies sicken and die. The Executive Committee seems now headed toward its greatest success, as an undertaker. The one great, safe offset against the centralization of control in our Executive Committee would be a live, simplified, effective missionary agency with a definite, concentrated world mission program. This will make our real Southern Baptist headquarters spiritual instead of "promotional," and missionary instead of "executive." If we will again get missions to going greatly, the Executive Committee will become an incidental ornament to our co-operation.

Our promotional agencies should be directly attached to our mission work, and only remotely connected with the Executive Committee. Executive power of some kind is a necessary incident in our Baptist co-operative work, but the Baptist common mind is instinctively suspicious of it; it does not need promotion. Let us promote Missions, then the Executive Committee can do its work without promotion. If we keep our promotional agencies locked up tight with our Executive Committee, the danger is that missions will become more and more incidental.

Missions got sidetracked in the Seventy-five Million Campaign. It took the second place in the allocations of the budget. Education got the lion's share. We used the missionary appeal to save our educational institutions. This cut backwards in the reaction of our Baptist people who are instinctively almost anti-institutional. The budget of the Seventy-five Million Campaign got out of gear with the Baptist common mind. This is not criticising our Baptist leaders. I helped them to make this mistake. Now I confess my error. I repent. I want to see it corrected as soon as possible.

From now on, let us place missions first; the other interests will follow. Schools and

hospitals follow as means and fruits. They are not missionary ends. Do not encase them as vital parts of mission work. Leave them free.

Readjust Our Mission Policies.

Carry on co-operatively with Baptists all over the world wherever they are organized for work. Work out mutually with Baptists in Argentina or China or Roumania plans of co-operation like those the Home Mission Board has been working with Baptists in Louisiana and New Mexico. Help them to support their work as they plan it and, instead of sending them missionaries as we had to do at first, help them now, wherever possible, to choose such workers from among us as they may need. This accords with the Baptist process of permeation instead of the Catholic method of domination on mission fields. This evades the nationalistic resistance that is rising against our Western Christianity in many countries. Our chief task is to inspire and comfort and help and guide the struggling groups of Baptists sprinkled all over the world. If we do this now, the whole earth will thaw to our interpretation of Christ and church life. This will wipe out the differentiation between mission work at home and mission work abroad as we have been doing them.

Let us begin to think of the Western Hemisphere, instead of Southern United States, as our base of supplies. We should link up as closely as we can with the twenty-five Baptist Conventions of Central America, the West Indies and South America.

In the United States and Canada are six great Baptist General Conventions. And in the Western Hemisphere South of the Rio Grande River and the Northern shores of the Gulf of Mexico are a quarter of a hundred young Baptist Conventions vigorous and promising. Here, verily, is the world's Baptist seed-bed; and Southern Baptists seem planted in a hot-bed at its very center. We simply cannot escape world responsibility. The other five great Baptist Conventions of North America are ready to work with us in this great Baptist Hemispheric enterprise. This will greatly enlarge our resources for helping the Baptists of Africa and the Far East and Europe to permeate the people of their continents with the New Testament Gospel.

Simplify Our Missionary Agencies.

We need to quit trying to work a unified budget with separate and even rival agencies at work in interlapping fields. We should elimi-

nate all dispensable agencies in our work; the Interboard Commission, the Co-operative Program Commission, and the Education Board are all dispensed with now. The next step is to liquidate the affairs of our shattered Home Mission Board. Southern Baptists need in their mission work only one General Mission Board co-operating with our different State Boards and with the Mission Boards of all the Baptist Conventions and Unions and Associations and Councils of the world. All the Baptist State Conventions of the Southern Baptist Convention have already simplified their agencies down to one Board; this tendency is inevitable in the Southern Baptist Convention and there is no stopping of agitation for it until this is done in our Southern Baptist Convention Mission work. It is primarily necessary to simplify the working of our Baptist agencies so that it will not require an expert accountant to figure out the overhead expenses of our work. This one thing will do more to restore confidence among us than anything else we can do.

Personally, I should be glad to see an unified Southern Baptist Mission Board given open way to go to our people immediately in a direct, missionary appeal in behalf of our whole Co-

operative Program. Make this appeal intensive and keep repeating it. Heat up missions white-hot in the souls of our people and our debts will evaporate.

In this readjustment we are not scrapping our Co-operative Program. We are only simplifying it and intensifying it in the Baptist popular mind. We are making missions its spinal cord, and restoring missions to the first place in our general budget. We are not thus reducing the amounts given to the work of our institutions. But the allocations out of the regular contributions of the churches should be made, *not to the institutions as such, but to the missionary, educational or social work going on in them,* which appeals to the bulk of the contributors in our churches. In this way, our Baptist extra-church relations can be kept personal instead of institutional.

This should become our general policy. And it can be worked out perhaps without reducing the amount of present allocations to the institutions now receiving current aid from our co-operative budget. For instance, instead of allocating a lump sum to our schools, we can pay the same sum designated from year to year for the salaries of such teachers as will provide

a point of living contact between the schools and the co-operative program of Southern Baptists. So also with all the hospitals and other institutions vitally involved in our missionary activity at home and abroad. This will be permeative instead of dominative. This is Baptistic.

Permeativeness is the distinct quality of real Baptist work. It is a dissolvent of the world's institutions. It must be kept liquid. We freeze it when we try to solidify it. That's our trouble now; we have chilled the missionary spirit in our Baptist institutions. Permeativeness is just another word for missionary spirit; saved souls sent into situations that need Christ. Thus is to go our Baptist work everywhere. It penetrates an institution of any kind where dwells a lone Baptist soul; it sets up a center of permeation wherever a group of such souls dwell together. No institution can resist it, no more than a bushy treetop can shut out the sunshine. It is felt far inside the most Christless situations like vibrant radio in the deepest caves of the earth. All our Baptist arrangements now wait for a fresh baptism of the missionary spirit.

These suggestions also apply with the force of fundamental principles in our various state conventions. With the Home Mission Board

gone, State Missions instantly assume again commanding position in our Baptist life; and missions must be made central again in our Baptist state programs. This will restore the glow of the days gone. It will tone up our district associations. All along the whole line, those institutions and interests incidental to our missionary work, tending more and more as they develop in complexity to become sub-Christian and even secular and to swell into huge dry sponges that suck up our missionary resources, must be held in permeative relations with our missionary work but separated from our missionary appeals. These institutions must be put upon their own merits in their appeals to our people for large, voluntary, designated support of that part of their work which is outside the pale of distinctly missionary activity.

This new Southern Baptist General Mission Board should be enabled to take up its work free of debt and to start *de novo* into its plans of readjustment to our new situation. There will then be an instantaneous rekindling of confidence. We shall have a new lever with which to pry at all the other debts in the Southern Baptist Convention and in our Baptist State Conventions

and in our churches, the appeal of our purely missionary work will be once more debt-free.

Conserve Baptist Principles in Our Missionary Use of Institutions.

If we do not watch at this point, we shall institutionalize all our whole Baptist Co-operative Program. When that is done, Baptist life goes out of it. Institutionalism and officialism smother out the Baptist breath. Any agency or office or institution at work merely to perpetuate itself in our Baptist life is a foreign body: it must be eliminated, or death ensues.

The Baptist process is to permeate institutions. Baptist principles are imperiled in any method of externally controlling even Baptist institutions. Before we know it, if we do not watch, we are on Catholic ground here; we are dominating them. We can not keep our schools Baptist by charter control: that is simply a form of indirect state control.

Comity is necessary among our Baptist enterprises. But among Baptists comity can not be organized. It is a splendid fellowship. The basis of our comity is not in a common control of institutions: it is in the spirit of our people. It shines out in the voluntary co-operation of

individual Baptists and local churches in the permeation of all kinds of institutions with a spirit which itself can not be institutionalized.

The most unhealthy symptom of our present condition is the fact that our leadership both secretarial and pastoral is getting its thinking encased in our institutions. That is a sure way to lose touch with our people. It will blight our institutions, if not cured. Our people and our institutions are already suffering from this ruinous error. The Baptist breath can not be bottled up.

Our grandfathers were following a Baptist instinct deep as Baptist life itself when they put our endowed institutions under self-perpetuating boards of trustees; they assumed that a group of selected Baptists could be trusted to be true to their trust just as much as a Baptist local church could be trusted to do its work. They reasoned that it was better to lose the property of such institutions than it was for these institutions to lose the Baptist spirit; that if the institutions lost the Baptist spirit, it would be a small matter for them to lose the property too. We are now trying to control institutions without fully supporting them, whereas, if we

fully support them, the question of control settles itself immediately.

Let us repeat it: our Baptist task is to permeate institutions, not to dominate them. Therefore we Baptists should run as few institutions as possible, and make the few institutions we operate as effective as possible in developing and inspiring personalities to penetrate all other institutions with their service and influence. For instance, we should operate a few hospitals at the highest possible efficiency; but we should work even harder to permeate all hospitals with the Spirit of Christ by furnishing them with Christian nurses and physicians, funds for charity work, and Christian workers. So also with schools. We should keep going a few Baptist schools at topmost intensity and efficiency. But we should use the persons trained in them to diffuse the spirit of Christ throughout our whole modern educational system. This policy will keep our Baptist program simple and fundamental; the opposite policy will complicate it; superficialize it; institutionalize it. God save us!

These fundamental principles brought into practice in our plans of work will lead us to a step in our Southern Baptist Convention that

might seem radical to us. Nothing less than this policy:

Take our Institutions out of the Regular Budgets of our Churches, and use the Weekly Contributions of our People to Support Baptist Men and Women at work in our Institutions. Then let our Baptist Institutions get their Support by direct Baptist Appeal to Baptists. Of course take care of exceptional cases, if necessary.

Up to twelve years ago we had a rivalry of special appeals for regular objects. That state became intolerable. Hence came the Seventy-five Million Campaign. From the beginning of that memorable drive until now, we have been trying to work one appeal for everything, for both special and regular objects. Now we are at the end of that; the unified appeal for all our work has become monotonous; it is worn out; it no longer appeals; it repels. Something else must be done now.

But what?

Why, this—

Let us begin at once, as a general policy, to confine the regular budget of the Southern Baptist Convention to strictly missionary work and

to service rendered personally by men and women in our educational and social-service institutions, and then set these institutions free again under proper restraints to appeal directly to their respective constituencies for support of those items in their operation which cannot be provided for by the co-operative program through personal service rendered by Baptist men and women at work in these institutions.

But as our Baptist Schools and hospitals and other such institutions are guaranteed this freedom of direct appeal, they must be prevented from abusing it. They must be kept solemnly warned that they are to be considerate of one another and self-restrained in their appeals for support from our Baptist people. Else, rivalry will break out among them and we shall be thrown back into an anarchy of noisy, frantic appeals. That would be crossed wires and confusion.

But we are now, as never before, in position to safeguard ourselves against such a lapse into an anarchy of special appeals, by six considerations: (1) Our sad experiences in the past make us alert against it. (2) As large allocations can be continued, through personal, permeating service in our institutions as above suggested, to

each of our institutions as it is now receiving from the co-operative program, with prospect of increase as soon as all proper adjustments are made. (3) Assured of current support for our general denominational budget thus simplified, our institutions can be given more leeway to appeal to those who will give them designated help, without danger to our general budget. (4) We have now begun to see that it is vastly more important for us to permeate even our Baptist institutions with the Baptist spirit than to dominate them by indirect state control through charter and by a system of subsidies from a central budget. (5) It is becoming more and more clear to us that our chief concern is not to keep up Baptist institutions, but to permeate all the institutions of the world, social, civic, economic, commercial, political, industrial, and what not, with the Spirit of Christ: this puts us on our mettle to run fewer and better Baptist institutions, and simplifies the problems of our current budget. (6) Now for the first time in all our history we have an Executive Committee functioning every day in the year as the Convention *ad interim* which serves as a balance wheel between all our institutions and interests in any emergency.

And besides all this, practically all our State organizations have now been unified into one board, so that the various State Conventions can handle this matter more easily and effectively than the Southern Baptist Convention can. We are already almost reorganized for this vital readjustment in both state-wide and south-wide co-operations. In our recent continued tinkering with machinery, we have been making more progress than we knew.

Thus it begins to look plain that, if we will dare to be real Baptists right on, many of the problems of our co-operation will work themselves out.

Press missions. Let other interests follow. Put our general funds into men and women at work for men and women and only incidentally into institutions. That is sound policy.

This is the way our Baptist co-operative program started over an hundred years ago with Judson and Rice. We need to come back to it now. For we are drifted so far from it, that it seems ideal. It will take a little time to get back to it. But we can get back to it more quickly than we can succeed by keeping on the route of gumming up all our institutions to-

gether in our missionary activity the way we are now trying to go.

No denominational interest should be put into a local Baptist church budget to be supported from the regular contributions of the people by offerings rendered in worship to God which does not commend itself to the average Baptist conscience.

The more educational and social we make our co-operative program, the more we broaden and diffuse our work; but at the same time, the more we limit and chill its appeal to our Baptist popular mind. On the other hand, the more strictly missionary we keep our co-operative program, the more narrow and definite and concentrated and penetrating we make our work and the more we widen and warm up its appeal to our Baptist popular mind.

Those institutions and interests necessary to our Southern Baptist work, but not yet intrenched in the intelligence and affection and conscience of the rank and file of our church members, should be given continual approach to the few Baptists who are already interested in them and an occasional privilege of direct, special appeal to all our people.

This policy adopted now may temporarily re-

duce the amount necessary in our regular budget for current expenses. But it will put our co-operative program back into touch with the common conscience of our people. It will solidify a regular income sufficient to carry our regular work. It will relieve that nervous anxiety we have had for several years about the financial support of our budgeted work, so that we shall not be afraid of special efforts to get particular individuals and churches and sections to relieve emergencies with designated contributions. It will also free us to go back to our people with a direct appeal for missions and that will make a new atmosphere in the mind of our people for taking care of our debts and our imperiled institutions. I believe it will restore confidence among us.

We have been thinking of our difficulties instead of our destiny. We are lying around chill and damp in a mudhole; when we should crawl out into the sunshine and walk around in it a little while. We'd feel better then.

Let the Larger Day Dawn.

Now is the time to get our Southern Baptist people under the spell of a great vision. We can, in this great day, pull them out of their

present provincialism into the limelight of the ages. If Southern Baptists will wake now and rise to answer their call at the new center of the world, the Western Hemisphere will be gripped with spiritual democracy, a thrill of new hope will go surging through every isolated, struggling company of Baptists in Europe and Asia and Africa, every kindred denomination of Christians in our time who stand for the democratic interpretation of Christ and church will feel the repulsion of the Catholic program and the pull of the Baptist program. Half the Christian world will swing our way.

If we dare now to let Christ come by the Holy Spirit into our Southern Baptist churches in a revival that vitalizes stewardship and in a plan of Christian education that applies stewardship in the business life of our people, we shall have resources to finance anything that Christ wishes us to do anywhere on our globe. Out of such a situation as ours should be precipitated in course of time, as by-products of the process of Baptist permeation, the greatest publishing houses of all history, several strong weekly and daily papers, great, democratic universities gathering students from every tongue and tribe and nation, radio-broadcasting

stations that speak the Gospel of Christ clear around the globe every day and night in the year.

Southern Baptists, in their position at the new center of the world and in touch with Baptists all over the world, should be able to sound today the spiritual tone of real democracy, which will reassure all the young republics of the earth, now trembling in fear of a sinister dictatorship that stalks everywhere among them.

But through all this and beyond it all we catch a glimpse of the whole world permeated and transformed by the presence of the living Christ. His cross is to be the crown of redeemed mankind. Every highway, every automobile, every printing press, every radio station, every flying machine, every invention of human genius, is to be at finger touch of those in whose hearts is the throne of the reigning Christ. Divine love is to burn through the earth with a holy fire and make it new; God's kingdom is to blaze out in earth's crumbling institutions. Every autocracy is to be melted. Everything in the Roman Catholic church contrary to Christ is to be purged out. Every true Baptist principle is to be universalized. Spiritual democracy is to be made radiant with the presence of the Son of

man. The kingdoms of this world are to be his kingdom. And no ocean is fuller of water than the whole earth will be of his glory.

Do we catch the vision? Dare we meet our present world obligations and claim a new age among men? Or do we sit still and whine over petty side-issues and little misunderstandings among ourselves?

Let us rise out of our pettiness into greatness. Let Christ dominate us while we permeate the world.

[THE END]

Date Due

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

266.61
J71

Johnson, Walter Nathan
AUTHOR

Which—dominate or permeate?
TITLE

N12861

266.61
J71 Johnson, Walter Nathan
Which—dominate or permeate

N12861